

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR EG US UR IS LE XF IR ET
SUBJ: SADAT INTERVIEW WITH LEBANESE PAPER AL-SAYYAD

1. DECEMBER 30 AHRAH CARRIES APPARENTLY COMPLETE TEXT OF
INTERVIEW ACCORDED BY SADAT TO LEBANESE AL SAYYAD. SADAT REMARKS,
MIXTURE OF OLD AND NEW, TOUCHED ON FOLLOWING:

2. EGYPTIAN ECONOMY: FOOD AND HOUSING PROBLEMS WILL BE
MAIN FOCUS OF EFFORTS IN 1977. PREFAB HOUSE FACTORIES "NEW
BEING INSTALLED" NEW CEMENT FACTORIES BEING BUILT AND ANEW
FOOD PROJECT WILL BE LAUNCHED EVERY THREE MONTHS." GOE WILL
CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT ECONOMIC OPEN DOOR POLICY IN ALL AREAS.
WHILE GRATEFUL FOR ARAB AID, SADAT WANTS "ARAB MARSHALL
PLAN" FOR EGYPT, BUT STRESSED HE WANTS ONLY LOANS, NOT GIFTS.

3. SOVIET RELATIONS. EGYPT HAS CREATED NO BARRIERS TO NORMAL
RELATIONS. IN WAKE OF FAHMY-GROMYKO MEETING IN SOFIA,
SADAT "READY TO SEND HIM (FAHMY) ANYWHERE" FOR FURTHER TALKS.
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AFTER PROPER PREPARATIONS, SADAT "QUITE READY" TO MEET WITH
BREZHNEV TO SETTLE ALL PROBLEMS. BALL IS IN USSR COURT,
HOWEVER.

4. MIDDLE EAST: SADAT OPTIMISTIC ON ROLE OF PRESIDENT-ELECT
CARTER, "ETHICAL AND PRINCIPLED MAN". VANCE APPOINTMENT ALSO

BODES WELL. SADAT HAS "PREPARED REPLY" IN EVENT ISRAELIS USE ATOMIC WEAPONS. ISRAELI MILITARY ATTACK EVER PRESENT POSSIBILITY; ARABS MUST MAINTAIN PREPAREDNESS. ON QUESTION OF ISRAELI "SECRET BASES IN EGHIOPIA" AND RECON OVERFLIGHTS OF BAB EL MANDEB, SADAT CLAIMED TO KNOW ALL FROM MOUTH OF YAR PRESIDENT HAMDI, ALONG WITH "OTHER MATTERS" HE WOULD NOT PRESENTLY DISCLOS. ARABS COULD BE ASSURED THAT RED SEA WOULD REMAIN "ARAB LAKE." RECENTLY, SADAT WAS ASKED BY "AN AMERICAN" (FYI: THIS IS APPARENTLY REFERENCE TO SADAT CONVERSATION WITH CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ) ABOUT EGYPTIAN PLANS FOR SHARM AL-SHEIKH AND ANSWERED THAT ISRAELIS CONCERNED WITH NAVIGATIONAL SECURITY. TO ACHIEVE IT, ISRAELIS MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN TAKING SADAT'S WORD "THAT GULF OF AQABA IS INTERNATIONAL WATERWAY" OR THERE COULD BE UN FORCES IN GULF, "PROVIDED NO ISRAELIS INCLUDED."

5. SADAT TOLD AMERICAN TO ASK ISRAEL WHO CLOSED ELAT DURING 1973 WAR, AND ANSWERED QUESTION BY SAYING THAT IT WAS ISRAELIS THEMSELVES DESPITE THEIR CONTROL OF SHARM AL-SHEIKH. WHY THEN DID THEY CLOSE PORT? SADAT REPLIED (DISCLOSING SECRET FOR FIRST TIME") THAT EGYPTIANS SEALED OFF ELAT NOT AT SHARM AL-SHEIKH BUT AT EXTREME SOUTHERN END OF "ARAB LAKE", "BY SINKING ISRAELI SHIP." "THEY THEN UNDERSTOOD THAT WE WERE SERIOUS AND IT WAS ISRAEL WHO ORDERED CLOSING OF ELAT AND NOT EGYPT."

6. EGYPT-IRAN: BILATERAL RELATIONS IMPROVE DAILY. SHAH HAS NEVER GIVEN SADAT IMPRESSION THAT HE WANTS TO CONTROL GULF.

7. LEBANON: ALL ARABS RESPONSIBLE FOR LEBANESE TRAGEDY BUT FRANJIYYA AND LEBANESE LEADERS MOST OF ALL. LEBANON UNCLASSIFIED

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MUST BE PRESENT WHEN FINAL ME SETTLEMENT IS THRASHED OUT BECUASE IT HAS BEEN ONE OF CONFRONTATION STATES SINCE 1948. WITH REGARD TO SURRENDER OF HEAVY WEAPONS BY PALESTINIANS; ASAD AND SADAT AND ARAFAT AGREE THAT RIYADH AND CAIRO SUMMIT RESOLUTIONS MUST BE TOTALLY RESPECTED. SADAT DOWNPLAYED DANGER OF ISRAELI SEIZURE OF SOUTHERN LEBANON SAYING US ELECTIONS (SIC) AND RESTORED ARAB UNITY, ESPECIALLY SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN JOINT COMMAND, RENDER DIFFICULT SUCH A MOVE BY ISRAEL.

8. SAUDI PEACE ROLE: SAUDIS HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH US. THEY CAN HELP CARTER KNOW ALL THE FACTS OF ME SITUTAITON SO THAT HE CAN MAKE FAIR JUDGEMENT. FAHD WILL SEE CARTER IN US SOON, SADAT PREDICTED.
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